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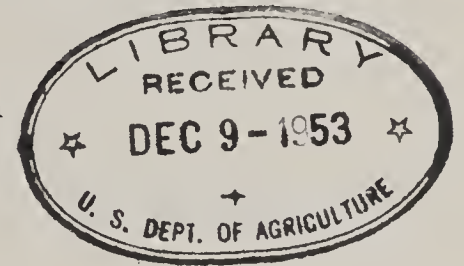


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# NATIONAL FOREST RECREATION AREAS OVERCROWDED

## Facts About the Recreation Situation

### In the National Forests



Americans made 33 million visits to the National Forests in 1952. They visited the Forests to fish, ski, hunt, swim, ride, hike, or look and sit. The largest single recreation activities were camping and picnicking. Of the 33 million visits, 14 million were to the National Forest campgrounds and picnicking areas provided by the U.S. Forest Service.

### Public recreation areas wearing out

Facilities provided by the Forest Service at public camp and picnic grounds are limited to those essential for safety, sanitation, and minimum comfort and convenience for the public. They include fireplaces, tables, safe water supplies, toilets, and garbage pits. More than 4,500 of these public recreation areas have been developed over the years; most of them were constructed by the CCC boys during the '30s.

### Many recreation facilities have now deteriorated

The Forest Service has not been able to repair or replace worn-out facilities fast enough to keep up with the increased use of the areas, and the continuing deterioration of the facilities.

Congestion results in abuse to facilities and hastens their deterioration.

### Acute sanitation problems exist in many areas

Many National Forest camping and picnicking areas no longer meet the sanitation requirements of State laws. Those areas which are a hazard to public health and safety will have to be improved--or closed.



## Recreation facilities now taxed beyond their limits

When a designated recreation area is overcrowded, many people camp or picnic on unimproved areas where there is danger of polluting water that is used for domestic purposes. The danger of costly fires is increased when campers build their fires in places not equipped with fire-places.

02-1-4-03 Inadequate facilities mean public dissatisfaction. Overcrowding reduces the enjoyment of those using the area. It may also spoil the area for future recreational use. Attractive ground cover is destroyed; dust accumulates; the trampling even weakens or kills mature trees.

There are not enough caretakers to provide for custodianship and cleanup of camping and picnicking areas, removal of garbage and debris, cleanup and care of latrines, looking after the water system, grounds clean-up, and so forth. The caretaker force is so inadequate that many camps are left without attention for weeks at a time. In such cases the accumulation of garbage and trash is deplorable.

So it is up to campers to do all they can to keep their camps clean and lessen this accumulation.

## Recreational use of the National Forests is increasing

The annual total of recreation visitors is now more than double what it was before World War II. Since the war the increase has been especially rapid. In 1946, 18 million visits were reported. In 1952, 33 million.

Opportunities for wholesome, inexpensive outdoor recreation are important to the health and well-being of the American people. The 153 National Forests, located in 40 States, are the most extensive and extensively visited outdoor recreation areas in America owned by all the people.

National Forest recreation is important from the business standpoint. Many business enterprises are supported by tourist and vacation activities. National Forest recreation is the economic backbone of many communities.

## What is needed

Existing campground facilities need to be maintained. Grounds need to be cleaned up and garbage removed more frequently. Water supplies should be made and kept safe. New camp and picnic areas equipped with modest but essential fire-prevention and sanitation facilities are needed to take care of the overflow from existing camps and the increasing numbers of outdoor recreationists.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
FOREST SERVICE

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